

Regional Applied Research Effort (RARE) Project Update

Due on a Biannual Basis (March 15, September 15)

Date: September 15, 2020

Project #: 2146

Project Title: [[HYPERLINK "https://rsprtracker.epa.gov/rsp/web/projects/2146/editform"](https://rsprtracker.epa.gov/rsp/web/projects/2146/editform)]

Regional Project Leads: Roger Reinhart Region 3 and Jennifer Wilson Region 5

ORD Project Lead (PI): Andrew Lindstrom, ORD/CPHEA

Communications Team:

ORD Center Communications Lead: Kelly Widener, ORD/CPHEA

Regional Communications TBD

ORD National Program Communication Lead: Michelle Latham, ORD/SSWR

OSAPE RSP Communications Lead - Nick Geroux

Project Update:

OSAPE has provided \$100K (R3) and \$60K (R5) of RARE funding respectively to initiate the project. This funding is being used to support an ORD ORISE Research Fellow and for supplies for sample analysis.

The project started on March 15, 2020 just as EPA and its various Offices and Centers began long-term remote work arrangements to help cope with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The ORD portion of the team has not resumed regular access to our laboratories or offices, and this has limited our ability to make progress on the aspects of this project that require laboratory support.

At the beginning of restricted access, work was already underway to assess the historical DuPont/Chemours data (from 2002-2018) in order to lay the groundwork for project planning and to serve as subject matter for a proposed peer-reviewed manuscript to summarize these important data for more general distribution to communities involved with PFAS issues.

With significant assistance from ORD's GeoPFAS team, a draft project sampling plan was completed on May 12, 2020, with 102 sampling locations identified for collection of soil, surface water, groundwater, vegetation, and sediments. Additionally, six different hypotheses were established to guide study design. The analytical plan calls for analysis of legacy PFAS (PFOA and HFPO-DA (GenX)) and other Method 537.1 PFAS, as well as high resolution Nontargeted Assessment (NTA) for selected samples.

ORD Postdoctoral Fellow Theresa Cantu Guillette started as an ORISE appointee on May 22 to lead the sample analysis portion of the study and to more generally coordinate field activities, data analysis, and production of presentations, publications, and technical products.

Regular biweekly team meetings with R3, R5, and ORD began on June 17 to assist with planning, execution, and communication for the project.

The project team has made preparations for a project briefing for the Ohio Department of Health and WVDEP and WVDOH including development of a briefing presentation.

The ORD group received a training and a briefing from R5's Julie Spellman on CBI protocols for receiving and maintaining DuPont CBI related to analysis of historical data which allowed access to the DuPont/Chemours QAPP (claimed CBI).

A scheduled September 10 briefing for the Ohio Department of Health was postponed due to the need for additional ORD review and time to notify Regional and Program Offices about the scope and nature of this RARE project.

On September 3, ORD began processing the final \$40K of FY 21 funding provided by Region 5 to support completion of the project.

The Region 3 Field Services Branch will perform field sampling for the project once it becomes possible for ORD personnel to reoccupy laboratories and offices. With ongoing delays due to continuing pandemic conditions, the project team suggests postponing full field sampling to spring 2021 with sampling based on a prioritization of locations and matrices to ensure coverage of topics/areas if resources are limited. A reasonable short-term goal for the remainder of 2020 is to collect preliminary samples from the Little Hocking Water Association wellfield to provide materials for methods development and field team orientation for collection and preservation techniques needed in the larger study.

An ORD/Regional communications team will be formed to help with outreach to state partners, and as appropriate, to local governments, communities and property owners where sampling will take place.

Revised project timeline:

1. Finalize the project Study Plan after input from the Ohio Department of Health and West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection including selection of sampling sites, collection periods, roles and responsibilities (provides the basis for the QAPP and other study related documentation) (10/20/20).
2. Develop project-specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) (12/01/20).
3. Review and approval of QAPP by ORD (12/15/20).
4. Collect preliminary soil, water, vegetation, and sediment samples from one or more locations for method development purposes (completed by 12/31/20).
5. Collect soil, water, vegetation, and sediment samples from locations specified in Study Plan (completed by 06/01/21).
6. Finalize analysis of study samples in ORD laboratories (09/01/21).
7. Synthesize results, generate report, and submit findings to peer-reviewed journal (completed by 3/14/22).

Project Impacts:

ORD upper management has fully engaged with the project and are helping to notify other Offices and Centers that need to know about these planned activities.

The Ohio Department of Health and West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection are aware of the project and efforts are being made to provide detailed briefings once an ORD-approved presentation is finalized.